

# Initial Questions and Answers for Parents Interested in a PS-8 International Baccalaureate (IB) School

An education campus and elementary school differ in that an Education Campus maintains students past their elementary years into middle school. This model at its optimal level of operation allows for a successful transition to middle school with smaller class size and an established culture and climate. The proposed IB education campus would house a Primary Years Program (PYP) and a Middle Years Program (MYP) that would develop and provide a framework for students to have the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes to be successful in many different high school settings.

Parents, community members, students, and DCPS staff would need to make a commitment to a 2 year application process to become an IB school. To learn more about [IB](#) visit us on our [DCPS website](#).

## **Q. What is International Baccalaureate (IB?)**

A. The IB Primary Years Program (PYP), for students aged 3 to 12, focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside. PYP is a whole-school program. This is a challenging program that demands the best from both motivated students and teachers. IB offers PYP schools extensive opportunities for professional development for teachers and administrators and PYP schools must commit to ongoing professional development and curriculum development. IB representatives also visit PYP schools from time to time in order to support an ongoing process of review and development, using standards and practices that apply to all IB World Schools.

The IB Middle Years Program (MYP), for students aged 11 to 16, provides a framework of academic challenge that encourages students to embrace and understand the connections between traditional subjects and the real world, and become critical and reflective thinkers. MYP is a whole-school program.

Like with the PYP, MYP schools participate in intensive and ongoing professional development, including curriculum development, as well as site visits from IB to support the ongoing process of review and development across all IB World Schools.

## **Q. What is the length of the IB application process?**

A. Any school wishing to offer PYP and/or MYP will need to attain IB World School status by first going through the authorization process. The requirements for authorization are the same for all schools, even though the process is administered slightly differently in each IB region. The International Baccalaureate of the Americas region authorization process typically takes 2 years.

## **Q. Is the MYP compatible with other programs?**

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- A. For a school that teaches an externally examined curriculum, the processes involved in the feasibility study, program authorization and evaluation aim to ensure that the combination of the two respects the integrity of the MYP. This has an impact on the choice of subjects available to students; the time allocation provided for them; the organization of teaching and learning; the school's structure; the adaptation of concepts, skills and knowledge to the corresponding subject group in the MYP; and, most importantly, the teaching approaches used in order to help students reach the aims and objectives of the MYP.

**Q. How does IB enforce Rigor?**

- A. Teachers are responsible for structuring varied and valid assessment tasks (including tests and examinations) that will allow students to demonstrate achievement according to the objectives for each subject group. These include:
- Open-ended, problem-solving activities;
  - Investigations;
  - Organized debates;
  - Hands-on experimentation; and
  - Analysis and reflection.

Teachers must use the MYP criteria when assessing student work in the eight subject areas. The MYP subject group criteria corresponds closely to the subject group's objectives, and must be used by all MYP authorized schools in all years of the program.

**Q. How does IB work for students with disabilities and special needs?**

- A. Like in all DCPS classrooms, there are a number of ways in which teachers can differentiate their instruction in order to meet students' special educational needs in the IB programs. PYP and MYP schools embrace the IB approach to teaching and learning and strive to develop students who are:
- Inquirers
  - Knowledgeable
  - Thinkers
  - Communicators
  - Principled
  - Open-minded
  - Caring
  - Risk-takers
  - Balanced
  - Reflective

These are traits that all students, regardless of whether they have special needs, can strive towards.